

Gogo outlines new system for faster in-flight Internet

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In-flight Wi-Fi provider Gogo Inc. unveiled a new technology Wednesday that will drastically increase speeds for connected fliers and be rolled out in the second half of 2014.

Gogo's main technology uses an air-to-ground network of land-based cellular towers that beam signals to aircraft, allowing passengers to get broadband access on their mobile phones, tablets or laptops. It has also developed [satellite technology](#) for international flights. The new service, which Gogo announced at an industry event in Anaheim, Calif., is called Ground to Orbit and combines its air-to-ground and satellite technologies. By installing a special satellite antenna on aircraft, peak Internet speeds should jump to more than 60 megabits per second from 9.8, Gogo said. At 60 megabits, the Web browsing experience should feel similar to what consumers are accustomed to with their home Internet service.

"Nothing will be faster (or) more efficient than what we're proposing today," Gogo Chief Executive Michael Small said.

Virgin America will be the first airline to offer Gogo GTO service, for which the company expects to gain regulatory approval next year.

Gogo officials didn't offer specifics on how the new service would be priced. The company sells a number of pre-paid passes starting at \$14 for 24 continuous hours of access and going up to \$49.95 for unlimited monthly access on all enabled aircraft. As capacity increases, "time will

tell whether the marketplace wants to see more bandwidth for the same dollar or lower price points," Small said. He did say that Gogo wants to "make sure we have a service for every passenger on the plane," a strategy that contemplates higher-priced services for business fliers and lower-priced ones for leisure travelers.

Gogo GTO is well-equipped for broadcast or Internet Protocol television services, Chief Technology Officer Anand Chari said. But he cautioned that even with the increased capacity for video content, streaming high-definition, full-length movies to every passenger "is simply not economically sustainable."

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